

# Social Media Policy (External)

<b>No:</b>	CO001	<b>Type:</b>	Policy
<b>Department:</b>	Office of Communications		
<b>Approval Date:</b>	8/22/13	<b>Approval:</b>	Elizabeth N. Lutwell

## Mission Statement

To provide information to the public via social media about the city of Las Vegas to enhance open government.

## Purpose and History

Social media has exploded as a new and popular means of communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is defined as interactive online technology that allows individuals to exchange and share information and resources including photos and video instantly via the Internet. Recent surveys indicate that more than half the adult population in the United States uses at least one social media site. It is estimated that more than 95 percent of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 already use some form of social media. Facebook alone has more than a billion users worldwide.

Social media sites include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g., Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Vine)
- Micro-blogging sites (e.g., Twitter, Tumblr)
- Forums and discussion boards (e.g., Reddit, Yahoo! Groups, Google groups)

For the city to continue to provide timely and accurate information to the general public, city residents, the news media, and other stakeholders, it is imperative that social media be an active part of the overall communications strategy. Furthermore, it is critical that the city communicate in the manners most used by the public we serve.

## External Social Media Policy

The external social media policy shall be to provide accurate, direct information to the public concerning the operations and deliberations of city government. The overall intent is to provide information about the city of Las Vegas to enhance open government. In addition, the city will encourage a dialogue with the public and respond to questions and concerns via social media. This fits well into the city's core purpose of building

community to make life better. As outlined below, the city will provide information via social media sites of its choosing to further communication.

### **Permitted Activities**

1. All social media posts created by the city will be related to city of Las Vegas business, functions, or those items deemed to be in the best interests of the city of Las Vegas. Non-city events, such as personal appearances by the Mayor, members of the City Council or City Staff at non-city functions, will not be included in city-produced social media posts.
2. The Office of Communications will ultimately determine who may serve as an administrator on behalf of the city on social media sites and establish what social media outlets may be suitable for use by the city of Las Vegas and its departments.
3. The Office of Communications will review department requests to use social media sites and assist departments in developing applicable content, selecting appropriate channels and defining a strategy for engagement using social media.
4. Employees representing the city via social media outlets must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the city of Las Vegas.
5. The Office of Communications will monitor content on city of Las Vegas social media sites to ensure adherence to this policy for appropriate use, messaging, and branding consistent with city goals.
6. All city of Las Vegas social networking sites shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by the city and shall have city contact information prominently displayed.

### **Restricted Activities**

1. City of Las Vegas social media sites are not intended as mechanisms for building support for a particular political policy, program, issue, party, or individual.
2. There is no obligation for city of Las Vegas social media sites to support non-city events.
3. City of Las Vegas social media sites are not to be used as campaign tools. However, they may provide objective information about election procedures, ballot instructions, polling locations, candidate forums, and debates. Campaign laws and city policies governing elected-official activities shall be followed. Current-term elected officials may be the subject of city social media posts only to the extent that such posts are coincident with the performance of their official duties as elected officials. Once a current-term elected official files for election, he/she will no longer have access to the city's social media posts other than those activities being consistent with the normal execution of their offices. The city will not use individual names, pictures, or quotes once an elected official has filed for office. Outside candidates who have announced and/or qualified for election to any elective office shall not have a presumed right to use city-sponsored social media posts to make individual campaign statements.

4. The city will produce no campaign advertising or promotional materials for political campaigns or ballot questions.
5. The following forms of content shall not be allowed on any city of Las Vegas social media sites:
  - a. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
  - b. Profane language or content;
  - c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation;
  - d. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
  - e. Any advertising that promotes the sale of any commercial product or services;
  - f. Participation in or encouragement of illegal activity;
  - g. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
  - h. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
  - i. Any information concerning a commercial lottery, gift enterprise, or similar promotion offering prizes in whole or part upon lot or chance.
  - j. Any direct solicitation of funds for non-municipal services;
  - k. Any material in violation of federal, state, or local statute or law;
  - l. Any material endorsing religious beliefs or religious philosophies.